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R. F. Kennedy seeks Garrison before end

"[illegible] are [illegible] between me and the White House," Robert Kennedy [illegible] Garrison.

On Tuesday evening, June 4 just one hour before the polls closed in the California primary, I was being interviewed in Washington, D.C. by John Hightower over television station WFAN. I was asked why Robert Kennedy appeared to accept the findings of the Warren Commission. For some months I had been aware of conversation between emissaries from Robert Kennedy to New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. (Since the confidence was not originally shared with me, I am not at liberty to reveal the names of the emissaries. However, should Garrison be asked for that information by the press, it is conceivable that he might reveal the names.) Yet I felt that it would be unfair to breach a confidential relationship while the primary campaign proceeded.

It was quite plain however, that as the last primary was about to end and that no remarks that I made in Washington could reach California in time to influence any voters, my revealing the confidential exchanges could not affect the primary result.

Accordingly I answered the question frankly and disclosed the nature of the various meetings between Garrison and Robert Kennedy's representatives. Over a period of several weeks, two different emissaries had arrived in New Orleans. Each had sought out Jim Garrison; each stated that he was carrying a message from Robert Kennedy; each was known by Garrison to be associated with Robert Kennedy, each carried almost the identical message; each said that Robert Kennedy did not believe the conclusions of the Warren Commission [illegible]

Robert Kennedy, they said, would investigate the assassination of his brother thoroughly if he were elected president and would vigorously prosecute those responsible. The essential purpose of the visits was to "reassure" Garrison that despite his public utterances, Robert Kennedy very firmly held a different private view.

Garrison asked why Senator Kennedy felt it necessary to suppress his dissent. Each emissary answered with the same phrase: He (Robert Kennedy) knows that there are guns between him and the White House.

Garrison pointed out that John Kennedy had not been assassinated during the campaign but long after his election. This was proof, Garrison added, that the presidency offered no immunity from an assassin's bullet.

Garrison said: "The lesson of November 22 is very clear. Any man who wishes to dismantle the war-machine and who appears to be in a position to do it will have his head blown off in the middle of an American city."

Garrison said that the only defense was a full and open assault against the assassins and full disclosure of the role played by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Garrison pleaded with the emissaries to convince Robert Kennedy that his life was more endangered by his silence than it would be by his public disclosure of the known facts.

Robert Kennedy had said that if he lost the California primary he would withdraw from the presidential campaign. Clearly there would be no reason to kill him unless he won. Minutes after his victory was assured in California he was executed.

Ramsay Clark, the attorney general of the United States, [illegible] stated [illegible]

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[illegible] no conspiracy in the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King and appeared not at all embarrassed when, some days later, the F.B.I. formally charged "Eric Starvo Galt" with "conspiracy" to assassinate Dr. King. Clark, whose vocabulary evidently does not include the word "conspiracy" (he thinks of it as a single hyphenated word, 'no-conspiracy') made a substantial effort to contribute to national tranquility by adding that Dr. King's lone killer "was on the run" and that his arrest would be made "imminently." As the months passed, it became apparent that Clark did not know even to which country the assassins may have fled.

Galt, or as he was later identified as James Earl Ray, was picked up quite coincidently by the British authorities on two unrelated charges and not at all because of the efforts of the F.B.I. or the Department of Justice. Several days after the murder of Dr. King, according to a Novak and Evan's column, at a conference at the Department of Justice Clark was asked about his public statements following the murder [illegible], the columns revealed, that he knew his public statements were false but he felt that they would help restore calm to the country.

The [illegible] that if a new cabinet position is created, Clark would be an obvious candidate for Secretary of Tranquility, but that he is quite obviously out of place at the Department of Justice where truth is supposed to be a factor.

The long and dishonorable record compiled by the federal authorities in this area makes it apparent that the American people will have to look elsewhere [illegible] seeking [illegible] ing of the assassination of Robert Kennedy.

Two weeks ago when I confronted Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. who was then campaigning for Robert Kennedy, with the unanswered questions about the death of John F. Kennedy, he angrily replied that the implications of the questions were "junitic." However, shortly after the death of Robert Kennedy, Schlesinger appeared on the Today show and was asked by its host, Hugh Downs, whether he believed it was possible that a conspiracy took the lives of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy. Schlesinger replied that it was certainly possible and that he believed that the matter must be explored.

While this subject has not been publicly discussed by members of the Kennedy family, Sander Vanocur, an NBC correspondent, was aboard the presidential jet that carried the members of the Kennedy family and Robert Kennedy's body from Los Angeles to New York. "While the press headlined and featured those aspects of Vanocur's comments which it felt most important, such as who slept next to the coffin at what hours, very deep into the story were those observations which appear most relevant.

Vanocur said that those on the plane and particularly Senator Edward Kennedy were very angry about "the faceless men" who had assassinated John and Robert Kennedy and Dr. King. They were considering the possibility of a conspiracy and indicated that they were not sure that Lee Harvey Oswald killed John Kennedy. Said Vanocur about the others aboard the plane, the [illegible] there's a kind of [illegible] ness [illegible] that's [illegible] I heard."

There is a phrase [illegible] nas" which is no less [illegible] anguish and grief for the [illegible] of inhibitions. Yet for the past four and a half years we have seen how well the members of the Kennedy family have been able to separate their private from public positions regarding these tragedies. Frank Mankiewicz, who had been Robert Kennedy's press secretary, commented upon Vanocur's disclosures. He said: "Everyone who was on the plane was there on the basis of friendship. No one was there as a reporter. Everything was private and that is how we intend to keep it. I am not going to comment on anything anyone said happened on the airplane."

In the meantime, the New York [illegible] in its headline that this is "a time to mourn," evidently not having considered the possibility of thinking as well. On television, utilizing the most modern devices for communication but in the spirit of medieval [illegible], the editors of the society inveighed against vague demons. They offered incantations to the atmosphere in the hope that they might alter it and exorcise from it the evil spirits. Everywhere the representatives of the news media spoke of guilt that we all share equally for the evil times that had come upon us.

While it is true that the air and the rivers have been thoroughly polluted by our industrialists over the years, it is not that atmosphere which caused the death of John Kennedy or [illegible] of [illegible] official [illegible] John F. Kennedy was not the first to die at the hands of the Central Intelligence Agency. Robert Kennedy will not be the last public official to be assassinated unless the full truth regarding all of these events is made public.

There is in this country one man with both the inclination and the ability to do this. He is the district attorney of New Orleans. Yet the press has ridiculed his efforts and distorted his evidence. The press has refused to reveal the efforts of the federal government to prevent Garrison from trying Clay Shaw, a man charged with conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. The federal government has issued an injunction that prohibits Garrison from proceeding with the case. Not content with that, the federal courts are moving in a direction which indicates a commitment to imprison Garrison and the members of his staff.

For Garrison this might be the most pleasant personal alternative available, for his life has been threatened repeatedly and should he ever be permitted to initiate the actual prosecution, the consequences to him may be more grave than the threat of mere imprisonment. Yet knowing this, he pushes relentlessly on.

We are not all equally guilty.